The second node will be installed if the demand justifies the same. As on 29-02-2000, out of 325 SSAs internet nodes have been installed in ninety two SSAs. The equipment for remaining internet nodes is under procurement/ installation.

Release of Commemorative Stamp in the name of Krantiveer 'Vasudev Balwant Phadke'

†2639. SHRI SATISH CHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the criterion being adopted for releasing Commemorative stamp in the name of great Indian personalities;

(b) the number of such great personalities in whose name postage stamps were released during last year;

(c) whether Government have received any proposal to release a commemorative stamp in the honour of Krantiveer 'Vasudev Balwant Phadke';

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) The guidelines for issue of commemorative postage stamps lay down that

(i) stamps on a personality may be issued on birth centenary or 10th/ 25th/50th/100th etc. death anniversary and the personality should be of national or international importance.

(ii) Not more than one stamp may be issued on the same personality.

(iii) The commemorative postage stamps issued on personalities should not exceed 25% of total number of stamps issued in the year.

(b) 28 (Twenty eight), sir.

(c) Not at present, Sir, However, on the basis of proposal received the Department of Posts issued a commemorative postage stamp in honour of "Vasudev Balwant Phadke" on 21-02-1984.

(d) and (e) does not arise in view of (c).

Expension and Modernisation of Telecommunications System

2640. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has been laying greater emphasis on the expansion and modernisation of telecommunication system in the country;

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the progress thereof during last three years and the amount ient thereon ;

(c) the State-wise and year-wise details thereof; and

(d) the plan mooted thereon for Ninth Five Year Plan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The circle-wise and year-wise (indicating the states covered ach circle) number of New Telephone connections provided during the three years is given in statement I and the circle-wise amount spent during ast three years is given in the Statement II (*See* below).

(d) A target of providing 185 lakh New Telephone Connections is set in linth Five Year Plan (1997—2000). However, Government has been making rts to achieve higher annual targets than what has been envisaged in the h Plan. The overall achievement is likely to reach about 220 lakhs phones.

In addition, the objectives of the Ninth Five Year Plan envisages :

(1) To replace life expired and Technologically obsolete switches with ital switches.

(2) To introduce Wireless in local loop, high bit rate Digital Subscriber ne (H.D.S.L), Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line (A.D.S.L.) and Optical bre technologies in the local network.

(3) To introduce better and reliable technologies for providing Village Public Telephones.

(4) That all exchanges will have reliable media.

(5) To make available sufficient band width for the spread of Internet and Information Technology.

(6) To set up Internet nodes at SSA-level at first and then upto DHQ level.

(7) To provide ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) facility. It has been planned to introduce ISDN upto DHQ level, subject to availability of demand.

(8) To provide IN (Intelligent Network) services in the first phase in 9 Major cities and in second phase all over the country.

STATEMENT-I

Circle-wise New Telephone Connections provided during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000

Sl.No.	Telecom Circle	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	2012	7501	8690
2.	Andhra Pradesh	216487	404980	655088
3.	Assam	36477	50375	61162
4.	Bihar	66294	103128	125179
5.	Gujarat	213824	255388	374022
6.	Haryana	73081	96170	117436
7.	Himachal Pradesh	40176	43217	60027
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	20819	18501	22158
9.	Karnataka	254378	237002	364715
10.	Kerala	230010	271065	350055
11.	Madhya Pradesh	102692	140352	154816
12.	Maharashtra (including Goa and MTNL Mumbai)	501441	502129	657868
13.	North East (including Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland & Tripura)	23030	35116	43801
14.	Orissa	67178	68175	89036
15.	Punjab	165969	193469	208288
16.	Rajasthan	147632	171445	182395
17.	Tamilnadu (including Chennai Telephone District)	364546	480238	546170
18.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	181043	186685	233677
19.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	132875	154917	184540
20.	West Bengal (including Sikkim and Calcutta Telephone District)	238140	281745	301803
21.	MTNL Delhi	180941	90392	176733
	TOTAL	3259045	3791990	4917659

STATEMENT-II

Circle-wise amount spent during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000

(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Telecom Circle	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000 (Revised estimate)
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	9.95	16.46	27.25
2.	Andhra Pradesh	550.55	696.94	1096.70
3.	Assam	122.45	112.85	143.51
4.	Bihar	269.08	325.45	385.05
5.	Gujarat	565.95	552.24	819.74
6.	Haryana	161.21	207.27	305.13
7.	Himachal Pradesh	121.59	119.87	168.09
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	52.51	51.04	103.18
9.	Karnataka	654.33	714.02	962.46
10.	Kerala	631.11	731.50	897.94
11.	Madhya Pradesh	329.84	390.54	516.72
12.	Maharashtra (including Goa)	846.63	865.52	1236.92
13.	North East (including Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland & Tripura)	104.72	182.03	210.64
14.	Orissa	167.28	174.44	224.12
15.	Punjab	463.32	526.00	589.94
16.	Rajasthan	386.01	374.81	568.14
17.	Tamilnadu (including Chennai Telephone District)	652.38	756.35	980.05
18.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	593.94	679.70	660.41
19.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	424.15	334.50	529.87

1	2	3	4	5
20.	West Bengal (including Sikkim and Calcutta Telephone District)	227.54	306.58	450.46
21.	MTNLs Delhi and Mumbai	912.54	977.44	1250.00
22.	Other Units	1291.56	1332.33	1623.68
	TOTAL	9558.64	10427.78	13750.00

Opening of Telephone Exchange in Assam Telecom Circle

2641. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) what plan has been taken by Government to bring N.E. Region at par with other parts of the country in the field of telecommunications ;

(b) how much telephone exchanges are functioning in village areas in Assam till now; and

(c) how much telephone exchanges are to be build in village areas under Assam Telecom Circle in the current year of 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) The perspective Plan (1997-2007) for North East Region envisages to provide telephone on demand by 31st March, 2001 against the all India target of providing telephone on demand by 31st March, 2002.

(b) Out of 415 telephone exchanges working in Assam state, 296 telephone exchanges are working in the rural areas.

(c) It is planned to open 50 new telephone exchanges in Assam state during the year 2000-2001. Out of which nearly 45 telephone exchanges are planned in rural areas which are likely to be commissioned in phased manner by March, 2001.

Wireless Telephones in Karnataka

2642. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are going to introduce Wireless telephones in Bangalore City during 2000-2001;